



*Always Ready
Always There*

The Gem State Guardian

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IDNG's JTF Purple supports battling summer's northwest wild fires

Under the direction of Governor Otter through a state emergency declaration, the Idaho Army National Guard's FireHawk (right and below) and crew, assigned to the 168th Command Aviation Company, were the first Idaho National Guard assets to respond to this summer's fires. The crew used the UH60L Blackhawk to perform nearly 100 picks (water pickups and dumps) during the fire season, dropping over 60-thousand gallons of water on the Lawyer branch of the Clearwater Complex fire in north central Idaho. The aircraft is configured specifically for firefighting, equipped with a special one-thousand gallon belly tank designed to disburse water in a manner highly effective in battling wild fires. The aircraft and its crew of four--three flight crew members plus a maintenance crew member--were activated to support firefighting efforts near Lewiston, Idaho on Aug. 16 before they were eventually transferred to battle fires near Coeur d'Alene. They were deactivated on Aug. 31 as the fires reached higher containment levels. (Photo courtesy Idaho Army National Guard).



[Right] Capt. Dale Wood, 124th Air Support Operations Squadron organizes members of the 124th Fighter Wing, Idaho Air National Guard, Aug. 26, 2015 at Gowen Field, Idaho. Approximately 40 Airmen were activated to assist the U.S. Forest Service in their firefighting efforts at the Tower Fire burning in the state of Wash., just west of the Idaho border. The task force's duties occurred within the state of Idaho near Priest Lake. In support of the incident command team, they operated traffic control points on roads leading in to the fire area. (Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. John Winn).



Additionally, on Aug. 28, 2015 more than 20 Airmen from the Idaho Air National Guard departed Gowen to support wildfire containment efforts at the Grizzly Complex in the North Fork of the Coeur d'Alene River drainage, near Grizzly Peak.

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